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ABSTRACT

As part of a larger study of the European Community (EC) initiatives and their effect on higher education policies and policy-making in all member countries, this case study examines EC impact on higher education in Ireland. Ireland was chosen as a possible example of how EC will impact higher education as it is one of four countries expected to be net beneficiaries of EC funds. Ireland has already received 5 billion Irish pounds (1989 to 1994) and expects to receive 7.8 billion more between 1994 and 1999. The study used qualitative methods to gather information in interviews with senior government officials, the national higher education governance board, and relevant people at most of the campuses of the national system of higher education. During the decades since the 1950s dramatic increases in the numbers of Irish individuals attending secondary and higher education have occurred especially since joining the EC in 1974. This extraordinary change would not have been possible without EC membership which made it financially feasible. In all universities in Ireland there is widespread knowledge of various EC educational programs and participation in these programs has had various impacts. Both direct and indirect effects on curriculum and faculty were found. Overall, there have been changes in funding patterns that have led to the reshaping and recomposition of the entire higher education system. (Contains seven references.) (JB)

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THE IMPACT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN IRELAND A CASE STUDY

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This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the Pittsburgh Hilton and Towers, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, November 4-7, 1993. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

The Impact of the European Community on Higher Education in Ireland: A Case Study

The question this paper sets out to address -- what has been the impact of the European Community on higher education in the Republic of Ireland -- has its roots in the larger issue of the relation of EC initiatives to higher eduction policies and policy-making in all the member countries. This larger study was undertaken by my colleague Patricia Crosson and ME between 1992 and 1993. She will be presenting detailed information about both the history of the European Community and the conceptual frame we used in that work and this report. The two presentations are companion pieces. This must be read in the context of hers to be fully comprehensible. At this point Ireland is a case study designed to get at the details of the larger issue by placing the specifics of one country under a microscope constructed from elements of the conceptual lense used for the larger study. By so doing we hope to refine both the method and the questions to be applied to the rest of the EC. Necessarily the particular circumstances of Irish History and of Irish educational policy restrict the scope of our conclusions. There is, as yet, no way for us to determine with confidence how applicable the Irish response is to the rest of Europe. Nonetheless, certain patterns seem to be emerging, some commonalties of concern, some similarities of response, which invite comparisons and entice speculations about the larger arena. . We have been unable to resist formulating some tentative hypotheses although it must be stressed that these are tentative and must be refined and tested through further scrutiny and research.

METHOD AND CONCEPTUAL FRAME

The method we used for gathering data in this study is rooted in qualitative methods as articulated, defined, defended and practiced by such researcher/scholars as Lincoln and Guba, Morgan, Clark, Tierney, and Kuh . The basic approach is quite rudimentary: if you want to find out what's happening ask those who are making it happen as well a those to whom it is happening. Compare their perceptions with one another and with as many objective correlatives as you can find including but not limited to data such as statistics, audits, written policies, scholarly articles, and the perceptions of non-stakeholding others such as scholars and other interested observers. With persistence and a bit of luck patterns will begin to emerge which can be used both to support initial conclusions and as the basis for further investigation. As with all good post-positivist science there is no end to this process, no truth to hold up as the definitive answer. Rather there are

illuminating observations whose warrant lies in the depth and range of the data and the plausibility of the arguments used to support them. Ideally, these observations lead to understandings and insights which inform and improve practice.

The data which supports the observations presented in this report were gathered by my colleague Professor Pat Crosson and me over two years of library research and interviews in the United States and Europe. The most comprehensive and current information came from interviews with government and EC officials, university and other higher education administrators, faculty and staff, a few students, scholars whose informed perspective provided us with especially useful data while also supplying a practitioner s point of view, and various citizens and non-EC or governmental officials whose experienced-based perceptions added to the richness and complexity of our findings. Initial investigations took place with colleagues and European visitors in the United States. These led us to others and to the slim but informative scholarly literature on higher education in the European Community. A group of names kept recurring, some quite familiar, others new to us but clearly well known in Europe; B.Burn, B. Clark, U.Teichler, M. Kogan, G.Williams, C. Gellert, R. Barnett, C. Halsey, P. Clancy, F. Van Vught, P. Maassen, G. Neave, and T. Becher. We determined to interview as many of these as possible within the limitations of time (theirs and ours) and resources (ours).

The first phase of the project (Sept. to Dec. 1992) took us to Ireland, England, Belgium, The Netherlands, France, Germany and Italy. In these countries our primary task was to determine, in the first instance, whether our basic question, what is the influence of the EC on higher education in the member countries , was so thoroughly investigated and well documented that our efforts would be redundant. The clear answer to that question was no. In fact some were surprised we were bothering to address the issue at all. Others were initially bemused but rapidly intrigued even to the point of paying us the somewhat backhanded compliment of wondering why no one had been asking these questions. In short, there had been no systematic investigation of the larger issue although there has been some detailed study of specific aspects of the question. What became clear, however, is that familiarity with the EC and its role in higher education varied widely depending upon where one was in the system i.e. how closely EC initiatives and activities impinged on one's worklife and, importantly, depending upon one s political posture in the world, most particularly one's attitude toward the idea of "Europe". For example, socialists (Labour) with whom we spoke in England were uniformly more informed about and interested in our topic than Tories who tended to be suspicious of the whole question. Mind you,

this was during the time of debate over Maastricht and of ambiguous commitment to the EC on the part of the Tory British government.

Our second primary objective during the first phase of the project was to become better informed about systems and institutions of higher education in the member countries and to meet the players. We accomplished this by protracted stays in Oxford and the University of Twente in The Netherlands supplemented by accompanying travel. All of this served as background and context for the second phase of the project which is the subject of this report. Dr. Crosson has dealt with the the intellectual and scholarly roots of the concepts and definitions we have used in this study in her paper. This paper employs the same notions of system and policy but focuses on impact in its own particular way as defined below.

As we put together the data gathered during the fall and winter of 1993 we realized that the picture which was emerging, while it had some strong features, was often fuzzy, in parts obscure, and altogether too vague and unreliable to support enough defensible observations to warrant going public. Instead we chose to return to Europe for a closer look this time utilizing a case study approach which complemented the qualitative inquiry we had been doing the previous year. With the full realization that no matter where one starts there is good reason to be starting somewhere else, we chose the Republic of Ireland as the site for the first of what we hope will be several case studies. These will be done in selected "representative" countries with the objective of developing a fair, if necessarily incomplete, picture of what one observer has called the major revolution in higher education of the twentieth century. Whatever else Europe is in the last decade of this century, it is an evolving phenomenon which demands that we pay attention. This report is a pence in that direction.

THE IRISH CONTEXT

We chose the Republic of Ireland for our first case study for a number of reasons that made sense to us at the time. From an EC perspective Ireland is an Objective One" country. This means that it is classified as one of four countries (with parts of others) whose net incomes and standard of living fall into a category which makes them net beneficiaries of EC funds. (They have received five billion Irish pounds between 1989 and 1994 and expect an additional 7.8 billion for the period 1994 - 1999). Thus Ireland is one of the EC countries where one might reasonably expect to find the most dramatic impact from a clearly discernable source. In addition, the scale of everything about Ireland made it an attractive site for research. In a relatively short time period we could meet with senior officials of

government, the Higher Education Authority (coordinating cum governance board), and relevant people at most of the campuses of the national system of higher education. These interviews took place during August and September 1993.

Currently the higher education system in the Republic of Ireland is comprised of the National University of Ireland with colleges in Dublin (University College Dublin, UCD), Cork (UCC), Galway (UCG), and St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. In addition there is the University of Dublin, Trinity College. Trinity is a special case in the system in that it receives government funding and has formal relations with the National University, especially University College Dublin, but retains a certain autonomy of governance and control of its own endowment. There are two other campuses which have recently been conferred with university status, the University of Limerick and Dublin City University. These together with The National College of Art and Design, Thomond College of Education and The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, comprise the university sector which is under the auspices of a coordinating and budgeting board, the Higher Education Authority. The non-university sector is comprised of eleven Regional Technical Colleges (RTC's) and the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) which offer short cycle training and retraining courses, certificates and diplomas in technical and commercial subjects and, increasingly, in the sciences and arts, and a few university level degrees in engineering and commerce. The entire system is known in Ireland as "Third Level Education" although "higher education" is also a frequently used term.

This multi-campus system is under the jurisdiction of a Minister for Education and the Department of Education, a branch of government. It is coordinated by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) which was established on an ad hoc basis in 1968 and given statutory powers in the Higher Education Authority Act of 1971. Is principle functions are "to further the development of higher education; to maintain a continuous review of the demand and need for higher education; to assist in the coordination of state investment in higher education and to prepare proposals for such investment; to review proposals from Universities and designated institutions for capital and recurrent funding; to allocate among these institutions the grants voted by the Oireachtas; to promote an appreciation of the value of higher education and research; to promote the attainment of equality of opportunity in higher education and the democratisation of its structures." (HEA ,1992) Further, and critically from the point of view of those involved, " Its *advisory powers relate* to the whole of the third- level sector. In addition, it has a funding role in relation to the Universities and dome designated institutions :" (HEA, 1992, italics mine) One of these

designated institutions is something called the "National Council for Educational Awards".

The NCEA has become, through practice if not through statute, the group which has the most direct involvement with the non-university sector, namely the technological colleges and institutes. Because the role of the HEA is only "advisory" to the minister for Education, and even though its powers relate to the whole of the third-level sector, we encountered much ill ease with the role government was playing by usurping the legitimate place of the HEA in budgeting and by centralizing decision-making power in Dublin. This was particularly true in relation to the technological colleges which saw themselves as being treated as lesser beings because they were not accorded the same treatment as the universities. At the same time the universities, and to some extent the HEA, saw their legitimate statutory powers being eroded by government action which favored the technological sector. Evidence for this kind of concern appears in the 1992 HEA Report on Accounts and Student Statistics for 1989/90. In his introduction the acting Chair of the HEA expresses his "thanks to the members of the authority who worked with me during this period to ensure that the statutory remit of the Authority was properly discharged." He goes on to recount an instance where the HEA was not consulted when the government decided to allocate 9.7 million pounds to UCD to purchase a college. "No proposal had been made to the authority by the College for this purchase nor had the matter been referred to it by the Minister for advice. While appreciating the sensitivity in regard to this purchase members were perturbed that on a matter of such significance the views of the authority had not been sought." HEA, 1992, p. 9. Our perception is that although there is a governance structure for the system in place there is concern on the part of people in the academy as well as those in the HEA that government is playing an increasingly active and direct role in relation, especially, to fiscal matters. (O'Buachalla, 1984) This concern also gets articulated as a fear of increased centralization. In this scenario the HEA becomes one of the bad guys encroaching upon the autonomy and integrity of the institutions. People with whom we spoke in the HEA admit to the tension between the Authority and government on the one hand and between the Authority and the institutions on the other. They see this tension as potentially creative and, in any event, a necessary condition of their work. It is not clear, generally speaking, that these tensions are any more intense or acrimonious that those one might meet in any governance system. However, when one gets to the specifics of the distribution of EC funds there is a certain racheting up of interest. Simply put, there is a large amount of money at stake (a total of close to eight billion pounds for the next five years) some of which will be earmarked for higher education. Who will get what amount for which purposes is partly

constrained by EC guidelines, but only partly. Exceptions, emendations and additions can and are made through negotiation, in the first instance between government and Brussels, in the second, third and beyond instances between interested players. We are told that sometimes these negotiations take place in open process by structurally sanctioned means, sometimes not. In either instance the EC is a more or less overt presence in the discussions, an influencer if not a maker of policy. The degree of influence is conditioned in part by the rigorousness of interpretation of EC protocols and guidelines held by the participants in the negotiations. Although we were never privy to any of these discussions one got the sense that many levels of politics were at play here, of such complexity and subtlety that no outsider, and perhaps not many on the inside, could ever hope to comprehend fully their intricacies.

Population distribution and geography have played a definitive role in determining the location, size, and growth rate of the third level system. The university campuses are located in major population centers spread around the country. All are within relatively easy commuting distance of one another and, more critically from an administrator's point of view, with Dublin which is where the action is. Dublin is also the greatest concentration of people (roughly a third of Ireland's 3.4 million people live in "greater Dublin") and, therefor, it is the location of the two major universities (UCD and Trinity) in terms of size and probably also reputation. The city also hosts the six campuses of the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), the City University of Dublin, and RTC Rathmines, one of the larger and more elaborate technical colleges. Just about everything that is taught in the name of third level education is taught in Dublin. Although there is a longstanding traditional rivalry between Dublin and Cork for primacy in Ireland Dublin remains the center of modern European and cosmopolitan life for the country. Galway claims to be the fastest growing city in Europe but no place holds the same attraction for numbers of young people, or for those who want to play an active part in the modern Europe, as Dublin. Correspondingly, the southern part of the Republic (Munster) contains the next highest concentration of population and of third level institutions. This is also the region slated for industrial and commercial development, that is, for allocation of EC structural funds to improve industrialization, commerce, and the infrastructure, especially transportation. Education has attracted a share of these monies. Not surprisingly, then, it is the northern tier of the country which, along with the wild west (Connacht), is most barren both in the literal geographical sense and in terms of educational institutions and student population. Inherent in this maldistribution of resources is the grounds for rivalries and accusations of favored treatment of the kind that

are familiar to all whose land grant university is being challenged by an urban-based newly established institution which is closer to the legislature and other seats of power.

History permeates everything in Ireland. Higher education is no exception. Part of the challenge of untangling what is from what might have been had there been no EC impact in Ireland is the task of trying to figure out where Irish policy was taking third level education before the country joined the European Community; how much of Irish policy was created either to make the country attractive to the EC or in anticipation of membership; and how much if any of this was in direct or indirect response to what was known about EEC priorities and objectives for "training". These tasks are further complicated by a realization that, particularly in Ireland, history, and a concomitant intense national pride that is somehow entwined with an equally intense sense of inferiority on the part of many, is often the reason (arrived at through its own peculiarly Irish logic) for almost everything. What this means in practice for an interviewer is that the Irish tendency to answer a direct question with a circuitous story gets amplified and complicated by a conflicted national pride which is simultaneously proud of the Irish position in the EC as a net beneficiary and ashamed of being poor enough to warrant being placed in that category.

Yet we do have a chronology of events and data to accompany those dates. Together these supply us with the beginnings of a picture that is both revealing and the basis for further inquiry. From this information it seems clear that Ireland was in sympathy with the idea of developing an expanded and improved post-secondary educational system before it joined the European Community. Given the amount of EC money that has gone into that system to make it what it is today, and given the relative inability of the nation to sustain an economic growth of the magnitude necessary to support an expanded higher education system, it is a fair inference that it could not have produced such a system on its own and that plans to do so were being laid in anticipatory response to guidelines already being formulated within the Common Market. Without the prospect of EEC membership it is possible that such plans might never have been formulated in Ireland, let alone implemented.

Ireland became an independent republic in 1922 after centuries long upheavals, resistance movements, and a divisive, and bloody civil war. At the time of independence poverty was rampant and schooling was minimal in most parts of the country. Higher education was beyond the reach of all

but the most affluent, established or, in a few cases, talented and lucky. Trinity College, considered by many, especially those outside the country, to be the leading institution in Ireland, was forbidden to Catholics by Church edict. University College, Dublin, along with Cork, Maynooth, and teacher training institutes, provide the primary, and for all intents and purposes, the only access to higher education for Catholics. While primary education was free during the post-independence era secondary education was not. Although by most standards the fees for secondary education were not high they were nonetheless prohibitive for the majority. Thus, not only was there no pool of applicants for higher education a school leaving certificate was rare enough and, until fairly recently, a mark of scholastic achievement -- much as the high school diploma was in pre-WW II U. S. of A.

Investment in Education, a report issued by the government in 1965, marks the beginning if the modern era in Irish education. In 1966 the country was spending thirty-nine million Irish pounds a year on all publicly supported education Of this almost 56% went to support 1st level schools, 29.5% went to 2nd level education, and 11.8% went to higher education which at the time meant primarily to the university sector. In that year the universities enrolled fifteen thousand students, 86% of all third level education in the country, fourteen hundred (8.2%) were in colleges of education and one thousand (6%) were in some form of technological training. Thus, in 1965/66 there were a total of seventeen thousand full time students (head count) enrolled in Irish higher education. (O'Buachalla, 1984)

By 1992 higher eduction had expanded, diversified and become more inclusive in both its population and its curriculum. Twenty-six years after the Investment in Education proposal was made the country was spending 1.6 billion on publicly supported education of which 35 million (22%) was going to third level institutions to educate 80,000 full time students. (Dept. of Education, 1992) This was an increase in enrollment of 280% over 1965/66 and an amount of money almost equal to the total being spent on all of education in 1966.

The trajectory shaped by these numbers has been projected into the twenty-first century in recent government proposals. (D of Ed, 1992) It is expected that by 2010 first level enrollments will have decreased to below their 1965 level and 2nd level will also drop, though less dramatically. However, third level enrollments are expected to rise until 2001, remain stable until 2005 and then decrease slightly by 2010. Translated into absolute numbers this means that full time enrollments in higher education are expected to increase from the current (1992) level of 80,000 to slightly over 100,000 by 2001. (D of E, 1992)

For a country which has the highest level of unemployment and one of the five lowest levels of income in the OECD (ESRI Report, 1993) these numbers represent a major financial investment in education. Moreover, although Ireland is one of the four "objective one" countries in the EC, in 1992 it spent a greater proportion of its Gross Domestic Product on education, roughly 5.3%, than all but three of its Community colleagues. Moreover, public expenditure on education in Ireland as a proportion of all public expenditure is greater than all but one of the EC member countries,17% as compared with 18% for Denmark, the highest in the EC and 10.5% for Greece, the lowest. By comparison, in 1992 the U.S. spent roughly 5% of its GPD on education and 18 plus % of all public expenditures. Ireland, remember, spent 22% of its education budget on third level education in 1992. This went to support 80,000 full time and another 12 ,000 or so part time students. (ft. note: these data are a bit soft for part time students. Sources dept. of Ed. Green Paper. 1992 for HEA sector plus Noonan. 1992 for technological sector, p. 7)

At a policy level one needs to go back to 1958 to track the beginnings of a shift in economic policy which, arguably, led to the the growth in numbers and resources for education we see currently. According to Professor Patrick Clancy, one of Ireland's few scholars of higher education, "The publication of the first Programme for Economic Expansion in 1958 marked a turning point in Irish economic policy. It signalled the abandonment of the pursuit of self-sufficiency and instead advocated the creation of an internationally competitive industrial base." (Clancy, 1991) The publication of this "programme" followed hard on the heels of the Treaty of Rome (1957) which, until the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty (1993), served as the effective constitution for what was then known as The European Economic Community. One assumes there was a connection between the two documents that is more than coincidental. The Programme for Economic Expansion has remained the fundamental framework for Irish economic policy to this day. Similarly, the Treaty of Rome supplied the basic philosophical principles which have guided the development of the European Community, including its educational programs. There is a certain irony in this because the Treaty of Rome does not talk about education per se as a concern of the EEC. It does talk about "training", however. It is the discussion of training and the development of human resources in the Treaty which allowed various countries to bring cases before the world court to argue that on legal grounds (read constitutional) they had a right to EEC monies to fund educational activities of specific kinds. Space does not permit going into the details of this interesting saga here. My colleague Pat Crosson is treating this policy formulating dimension in a separate paper. For my

purposes. however. it is important to note that as guidelines affecting higher education began to take shape through specific decisions by the world court that had the effect of legislation by judicial interpretation. Brussels began designing and funding programs which were consonant with those Court decisions. As funding guidelines became public through various EC initiatives. economic and educational practice in the participating countries began to conform to the objectives established by the various EC Commissions. This initial basic impact laid the groundwork for a variety of impacts upon education in Europe.

IMPACT ON IRELAND

Because the EEC was initially and primarily concerned with economic union and trade activity its effect on education took a while to emerge. For Ireland the decade of the sixties was a time of economic consolidation. redirection. and rapid expansion which "effected a radical transformation in Irish social structure." (Clancy. 1991) The country experienced a shift away from agriculture toward "professional. technical and other skilled profession[s]" as did much of Europe during the same period. According to Clancy. Ireland stands out in Western Europe because this change is so recent and because of "the extent of direct state involvement in the direction and orchestration of this policy transformation." (1991, p.30) This involvement led to "The subsequent reorientation of the educational system towards a preoccupation with labour market needs . . ." (Clancy. 1991) Herein lies a succinct articulation of the basis for arguing that the EC has had a fundamental and formative impact on higher education. It is this reorientation of the educational system that was in direct response to EC objectives as promulgated in its funding guidelines. It is this same reorientation that has shaped current third level practice in Ireland and which is the subject of continuing debate. Yet nowhere in the article I have been quoting does Professor Clancy even allude to the EC let alone give it a causal role in policy formation or educational practice.

Let me pause at this point to make clear exactly how I am using the concept of "Impact". My fundamental definition holds that impact occurs when a reasonable and defensible argument can be made that one phenomenon would not exist in the way it does at the time it does if it were not for the presence of a preexisting phenomenon which provides the conceptual ingredients and catalytic energy for its creation. In this general instance the former can be said to have had an "impact" upon the latter. This relation can take many forms. The most obvious, and often most elusive, is a linear; unidimentional causal relation between event A and consequence B

without any mitigating circumstance. This rarely happens in the world of social or political activity, if ever. More likely is a case where the preponderance of evidence suggests a linkage between two events and, if one preceeds the other, it becomes reasonable to assume some kind of causality has taken place; the first has had an "impact" on the second. Here there may be mitigating or otherwise confusing circumstances galore. Critics can argue for coincidence or independent invention, or consanguinity resulting from an unidentified event even further removed in time or, most damning of all, sheer fantasy and invention by the proposer of the relation. This latter concern gets at the heart of suspicions held by some that qualitative inquiry lacks the rigor and verifiability to qualify as legitimate research. Be that as it may, the basic concept of impact being applied here rests, for the most part, on evidence that can be checked by replicating the study and examining its sources. For the remaining part, my conclusions rest on reasoned inference that can be challenged in open debate. Reason leads me to propose that there can be indirect as well as direct impacts and that there may be those that are unconscious as well as conscious. The theoretical suppositions underlying this contention as applied to social science research are probably better debated elsewhere. But I do argue that a phenomenon such as The European Community can create such a complex intellectual, moral and political environment, not to mention pragmatic imperatives, that actors within its sphere of influence may be responding to its ethos without being aware they are doing so.

Discerning impact and determining the extent or degree of impact are two different tasks. For the purposes of this paper I have attempted only a crude assay which seeks to discover the presence of impact and then combines perceptions of those affected with numerical and other quantifiable data to suggest a relative degree of significance. With time and further investigation we expect to be able to refine these measures and, without resorting to false quantifications., be able to present a scale of relative impact in which we have confidence. In must be borne in mind, therefore, that these are preliminary findings subject to reformulation.

Direct Impact on Higher Education Policy

Given that Ireland did not join the Common Market until 1974 it can be fairly argued that Professor Clancy was right to leave consideration of its role in policy formation out of discussion, especially considering that it was not his topic. The question remains, was the 1958 programme for economic expansion in any way influenced by what was known about the Treaty of Rome? or, further, was the 1966 report Investment in Education constructed with a view toward conforming to EEC objectives and guidelines both in

order to be more acceptable as a member and to get a jump on what was to come? An alternative explanation is that these changes were in the air in Western Europe and they made good sense for Ireland regardless of the presence of the EEC. That is a satisfactory explanation except for one major consideration -- Ireland could not afford to implement Investment in Education without help and the helper of choice was the EC.

Whatever conversations were taking place in the halls of Irish government in the late fifties and early sixties changes in economic policy led directly to changes in educational policy at every level. Primary education was expanded and the role of government in oversight and quality assurance increased. Secondary education became free. It also became a more coherent system. In the mid-sixties a standard nation-wide Leaving Certificate Examination was instituted. This had the effect of creating for the first time a nationally recognized and certified pool of qualified applicants for third level education. As secondary schooling became free and therefor more accessible participation rates rose vigorously. (164% between 1964 and 1989) Moreover, both the absolute numbers and the proportion of students staying in school past the compulsory age of 15 increased from an average of 25% of the 16,17 and 18-year olds in 1964 to 68% of the same age cohort in 1989. In addition, the proportion of secondary students taking the leaving certificate examination rose to 66% over the same time span. (by 1992 it is 72%). (Clancy, 1990; Dept. of Ed., 1992) All of this increase meant that the demand for places in the third level system grew correspondingly. A large part of this increase came about as a consequence of expanded opportunity. Young people whose families had never even finished primary school were now being accepted into the third level. The same process which took place over a protracted period of time in the United States was compressed into a couple of decades in Ireland with similar results, increased diversification of both student body and curriculum, expanded numbers, and, especially, increased pressure on the system, in this case that means government, to respond to demands for further education and training by enlarging the system.

As new sectors of the population were seeking access to higher education the population itself was increasing. But it wasn't the increase in population numbers alone that caused so much pressure, it was the unprecedented rates of participation at every level. In 1980 the rate of admission to full time higher education was 20% of the 18 year old cohort. (Clancy 1990) By 1990 it was 28% and by 1992 the Department of Education estimates that 45% of the cohort is engaged in some form of full time third level education. (D of Ed., 1992)

As anyone who experienced the analogous spurt in the growth of American higher education during the fifties, sixties and seventies knows, such changes, especially such rapid changes, have a profound and multi-facited impact at every level of the system. In Ireland, because of scale as much as anything , the intensity and sheer concentrated force of impact on what was, and still is by most standards, a small system, has been so pervasive that it has almost gone unrecognized. This is a paradox of major proportions. As noted earlier, there is a general reluctance in Ireland to acknowledge indebtedness to the EC without qualification. Awareness of the role the EC has played in higher education tends to diminish as one moves through the hierarchy away from the centers of power and decision making in Dublin through the administration of the various campuses to the faculty, staff and students of the institutions. Those at a policy-making and decision-making level are aware of the sources of funds and take into consideration the presence of Europe and the objectives set by its various Commissions as they plan, design, and distribute the budget. But the worker on the campus, in general, is less aware of the sources and thinking that lies behind the distribution of funds than of the inadequacy of the funds for his or her purposes. There are major exceptions to this general rule, however. The most obvious exception lies where you might expect --with those whose work directly involves them with Europe. The general impact here is that involvement with the EC has resulted in the creation of jobs that would not have been there otherwise. The more specific impact on higher education is discernable in the curriculum.

Direct Impact on Curriculum

If one defines curriculum broadly to include all of the possibilities for learning of all kinds made available by an institution of higher learning then travel programs as well as courses of study are part of the curriculum. By 1993 most university campuses in Ireland have something called a "Europe Desk" or some analogous office. Here there is direct connection with EC programs that involve students and faculty. Here, typically, there is an informed and knowledgeable staff who are well aware of EC programs, policies, practices and culture, both in general and as it affects them. Such people constitute a mini industry. They are in communication with one another and their counterparts in Europe. The directors of such offices fly off to Brussels periodically to be trained, briefed or otherwise to keep in touch with the nerve center and do all they can to insure the continuous flow of funds for their projects.

These projects fall into two basic categories, those that affect students most directly and those that affect faculty most directly. Theoretically all of

the activities ultimately are meant to be for the benefit of students but the connection between the activity and living students is sometimes so tenuous as to be invisible. Of the student-oriented projects it seems safe to say that ERASMUS is by far the best known and most widely discussed. Others, such as LINGUA, a program designed to promote facility with European languages, TEMPUS, which promotes faculty exchanges, and COMETT which provides work opportunities for students to gain experience in Europe related to their academic study, involve smaller numbers and fewer resources. Each has its own particular impact, however, and none would be present were it not for the EC.

One reason ERASMUS is so well known is that Brussels has been smart in the way it is managed. Each participating department must have a faculty member to coordinate the activities for that unit. Moreover, that faculty member, with some help from the central office for the campus (if there is one) is responsible for identifying and coordinating with a partner department on a cooperating campus in Europe. Trinity, UC Cork and UC Dublin each have between fifty and seventy participating departments, some of which are clumped for efficiency's sake. This means that on those three campuses alone a total of more than a hundred faculty are involved with ERASMUS and, therefor, with the European Community. But it is clear from conversations with some of these faculty that they do not actively think of themselves as agents of the EC nor do the students necessarily think of themselves as participating in an EC program. From their point of view each is either facilitating or doing an exchange program and the fact that it is conducted under the auspices of the EC, although well understood, fades from consciousness. Nonetheless, in terms of numbers alone, ERASMUS has had a considerable impact on Irish higher education. Not only have faculties become more aware of 'Europe" through their relation to such programs, administrators and other officials have also had their consciousness raised. Consciousness raising, I would argue, is still an important part of EC objectives especially considering the rough sledding Maastricht continues to experience. Although the numbers participating in ERASMUS are approaching 5% that is still short of the ten percent goal set by Brussels. Moreover, the vast majority of student participants come from the University sector, a piece of data worth noting because of what it suggests about who goes to which institutions for what reasons. It may be that an unexpected outcome of the program in this particular instance has been to reenforce certain bias towards the technological sector or it may merely represent a class bias against what is perceived to be a non-instrumental waste of time. The question of the quality of the ERASMUS experience, what its educational impact might be, is not easily answered. The few students who had gone on an ERASMUS sponsored program with whom we spoke

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were enthusiastic and praising of the program. Likewise, the faculty who work with such students feel their time and concern is well rewarded. (See Opper et al, 1990 for a systematic look at the effects of the ERASMUS program) But faculty have more than a passing career interest in wanting to see ERASMUS students happy and the program a success, some perceive that their future depends on the success of such programs.

LINGUA presents a somewhat different story. Because it is limited to the teaching and learning of languages it attracts a smaller audience than ERASMUS which attracts students from all parts of the curriculum. However, its impact may be sharper and more precise. Language departments in Ireland, as in many places, have been struggling to attract students in recent years, especially in those languages which are not considered mainstream. Secondary students in Ireland must study one language in addition to Irish and English. Third level students, not surprisingly, tend to stick to what they have already done at secondary school which means either French of German, typically French. As a consequence, before LINGUA, other language courses had difficulty attracting students. Now, however, enterprising department heads can promote the study of their language by establishing successful relations with attractive universities on the continent. According to our informants there are cases where the LINGUA program's success has literally saved a department. Here faculty as well has students have been impacted by the presence of EC programming -- and so has the curriculum.

There is another kind of impact that results from these travel programs. Because Ireland is an English speaking country, and because English has become the lingua franca of the EC, Ireland has many more applications for admission to its ERASMUS and LINGUA programs than it can handle. This raises interesting policy questions concerning the appropriate balance between native and foreign students, especially in Irish literature courses which are the prime attraction for many foreign students and which are considered central to Irish higher education by many faculty, students and administrators. There is a potential here for a secondary industry not unlike that which some American institutions have devised with Asia. Whether a publicly supported higher education system in an EC member country can or should engage in such activity is a question that remains to be answered. For our purposes it servers to illustrate a kind of ethical, educational and fiscal dilemma that would not have come about were it not for the EC.

Another major direct impact on the curriculum has been in the development of European Studies programs. As with LINGUA and ERASMUS, faculty as well as students have benefited from EC funding for programs

which promote interdisciplinary approaches to the study of issues which are of particular interest to the European Community. Although direct funding is limited to graduate programs, the possibilities of exchanges and travel inherent in LINGUA and ERASMUS, coupled with the enthusiasms and interests for faculty and post graduate students, generate new possibilities for study across the undergraduate curriculum as well. In some cases this simply made more possible things faculty were doing anyway. In other instances new or fresh combinations of people gathered around a theme which was amenable to analysis from their discipline-based perspective. As one program brochure puts it:

> Europe is undergoing and unprecedented process of change. . . . various policy problems are leading to expanded research, environmental and social programmes. At the same time the key role of the individual states is being re-emphasized. . . . Those who are interested in Europe must have a clear grasp of these developments. This requires a deeper knowledge than a familiarity with individual directives ...It means having an integrated understanding of the forces, mechanisms and consequences that underlay the European process. It means being able to place current developments within a conceptual framework that brings out their true significance." (CEEPA, UCD)

While perhaps a bit stronger in its wording than some, this statement reflects the kind of attitude toward Europe and interdisciplinarity that characterizes other European studies programs. Equally revealing is their commitment to more than one discipline. ". . . this programme is thoroughly interdisciplinary. This is based on the belief that contemporary Europe in general, and the European Community in particular, can only be understood by an approach that incorporates four basic disciplines -- Economics, Political Science, Law and Business." Other departments such as languages and literatures, history, and Sociology/Anthropology have also developed combined approaches to the study of Europe. These programs create a world of new possibilities for teaching as well as for learning. Their potential at this point is unfathomable, their full current impact is unknowable, but it seems clear that the winds of change that are affecting European continent and the European Community have reached the western edge of Europe.

Thus far I have been discussing broad impacts upon the whole of third level education. There are also some impacts which are specific either to the university or to the technological sector. Throughout the EC technical education has received a disproportionate share of attention since the Treaty of Rome. The somewhat simplistic explanation for this is that the union was about trade and making Europe competitive. In order to to this it needed to

develop a more skilled and diversified workforce, hence an emphasis on training and human resources. As mentioned earlier, it was only through rulings by the World Court that education, as contrasted with training, became included in formal EC programs, and it was not until the Maastricht Treaty that education became a specified part of the EC mandate. One dramatic consequence of this emphasis in Ireland has been the creation of a network of Regional Technical Colleges which, along with the Dublin Institute of Technology constitute the technological sector of Ireland's third level system. Of these DIT and RTC Cork were in place prior to any EC involvement in Ireland. Most of the others were established in the early 1970's. The most recent RTC was built in Tallaght in 1992 and a previously existing program in Limerick was also designated an RTC that same year. Thus, in effect, an entire technological sector was created, designed, built and financed, either directly or indirectly, under the aegis of the European Community. To trace in detail the genesis and development of this process is beyond the scope of this paper although in fairness I must point out that there are those in Ireland who would resist such a bald attribution. Surely there was a complex set of events at work which resulted in this large-scale enterprise, much of which might well have been developed by Ireland on its own -- but it wasn't. One result of this new set of opportunities is that it became the fastest growing sector of higher education (an increase of 112% between 1983 and 1993 as compared with an increase of 60% during the same decade in the university sector). Part of the attraction of technological education for students lay in what was perceived to be the greater likelihood of post graduate employment than was possible with a more traditional university subject. At least such was the conventional wisdom. As economic conditions would have it employment of any kind has become difficult to get, especially in Ireland and, ironically, especially in the technological and commercial sector. There is a bittersweet story going around that Ireland has more accountants that the whole of Japan. True or no, people within and without the system are aware that there may have been overmuch of what seemed like a good thing at the time.

Ireland has long been a country which exports its people and the modern era is no exception. A big difference between the nineteenth century and now is that those who leave today are likely to be much better educated and be headed for Europe rather than North America or Australia. To the extent that the EC is working as a working community the educated Irish have been prime beneficiaries. This opportunity creates specific kinds of demand for training programs and courses of study. Unlike earlier eras students are more active voters with their feet. This, combined with EC guidelines for funding, has produced two clear results, there is more demand by qualified secondary school leavers for spaces throughout the system than

can be met, and larger numbers from historically disenfranchised sectors of the population are making it to and through colleges and universities. EC funds pay up to 90% of tuition and fees to eligible students who attend technical colleges and programs. Although to the best of my knowledge this phenomenon has not been studied closely, the impact upon families and individual lives, let alone institutions and society as a whole, must be revolutionary

By 1993 forty-five percent of the third level full time enrollments are in the technological sector (roughly 31,000 students). (Noonan, 1993) Not surprisingly, science and engineering programs in the universities are also experiencing an increase in demand to the extent that in at least one case the department is said to have admitted an abundance of students then figured out what to do with them. One spin-off from this kind of increased demand, as with language departments, has been an increase in job security for those already on board, and the creation of jobs were there weren't any. These tend to be either part time or soft money jobs, however, so one can not yet claim this as a long term effect. Nonetheless, the presence of continued EC funding coupled with an emphasis on business and technological studies has created an optimism where there had been none. It has also invigorated a latent rivalry within the system between the technological sector and the university.

As noted above, there has been controversy surrounding the role of government in the modern higher education system. There has also been discussion of the proper role for the HEA. Some have suggested that it is an error to perpetuate a "binary system" which takes the technological colleges away from HEA jurisdiction and, in effect, gives control to the Minister of Education. (O'Buachalla, 1984) Higher education in Ireland has increasingly become a creature of government. Practically speaking, there is no independent sector. But the HEA has served as a buffer between the whims of government and the demands of institutions -- until the stakes escalated with the presence of specifically earmarked EC funds which the government wanted to maintain control over, or so it seems to an outside observer. Rivalries between universities and technological institutions do not need EC monies to remain healthy but EC priorities can skew demand and create markets that are artificially supported and which have the effect of raising a dimmer to a boil.

Indirect Impacts on Curriculum and Faculty

It would be overstating my case to claim that the activities described above are, in all of their dimensions, a direct consequence of EC initiatives.

anymore than a parent can be held responsible for all of the behaviors of his or her offspring. But there are responsibilities, some legal, some attitudinal, some behavioral, in both cases. Like the continuing nature/nurture debate in the social sciences, it is difficult to assess with precision the amount of responsibility one can claim for the EC in the behaviors of its offspring. Perhaps this is an inept metaphor. Certainly Ireland and its system of higher education pre date the EC but my argument has been they would not be as they are now if it weren't for specific activities of the European Community. My colleague Dr. Crosson has proposed that the EC can be understood as a starter mechanism, influencer, or shaper of educational policy in the member countries. In each instance its presence will have had a more or less defining impact upon policy.. Policy in turn conditions action -- and thought. My argument here, then, is that because of the presence of the EC, faculty who participate in European Studies programs, to take but one instance, think of themselves and what they are about differently from the ways they thought before EC. So, by the same token, do their students. If these things are true, and if there is a visible and active presence of these people on any given campus, then the institution begins to think of itself in new ways and the ripple effect carries on through the system.

In the case of Ireland aspects of funding agreements negotiated between Dublin and Brussels have been promulgated as policy, offered as inducements to certain activities, and otherwise been held out as a mirror for behavior. These messages are received with varying degrees of intensity and accordingly assigned levels of importance. Where there are sensitive receivers, in tune with current trends and responsive to nuances in the messages, many things can happen, some of them profound, most ordinary. Where new programs are initiated and students whose parents never completed secondary school or left the village town land go off to foreign lands the stage is set for the possibility of big changes, changes that are impossible to quantify.

In the Republic of Ireland there have been changes in funding patterns that have led to the reshaping and recomposition of the entire higher education system. I have given you the numbers that support this claim. There have also been changes in curriculum, in faculty and student behavior and, by implication, in how each group thinks about teaching and learning and what it means to be an educated person in the contemporary world. Because EC has created a new sense of Europe and is trying to create a new notion of "European Citizen" people in the member countries, particularly the young and better educated, are thinking of themselves differently. Students want the same things they always did but some of those things now come in a different shape or by different means than they

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did before the European Community began extending the mandate of the Treaty of Rome into the higher education arena.

How, then, are we to assess impact? How deep, how enduring, how pervasive will the effects of this new world be? What forms will these effects take, and how much can be attributed to forces set in motion by the EC and how much to other phenomena that may well have produced similar results? These and similar questions must be the subject of further investigation and reflection. In this paper I have merely skimmed the surface by noting some of the results of our initial explorations into previously unknown territory. Clearly the European Community has had an impact upon higher eduction in the Republic of Ireland. The effects I have discussed here do not begin to probe the by-products such as the impact upon the local economy of increasingly wealthy and active educational institutions, nor do they explore what it means to a society to experience democratization of higher education in a fish bowl for all to see. Ireland is still in the midst of a revolution which is yet to be comprehended. It is inaccurate to claim that EC thinking and EC monies are a primary force in that continuing tension. Certainly they have made differences in higher education by fueling desires and contributing to the shape of outcomes but there is a sense in which this is but a veneer on a more enduring and solid set of concerns about identity and place in the world that have yet to be resolved. On the other hand, it is tantalizingly possible that the new Europe envisioned by the movers and shakers in Brussels may hold a promise for Ireland unlike any since the days of Cu Chulainn when there was greatness in the land. But that is another telling for another time.

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